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The Commonweal

September 23, 1949

Journey For Italian Children

Peter Thompson

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Why Health Insurance?

Truman's Farmer-Labor Appeal

Loan to Tito

VOLUME L 15c NUMBER 24

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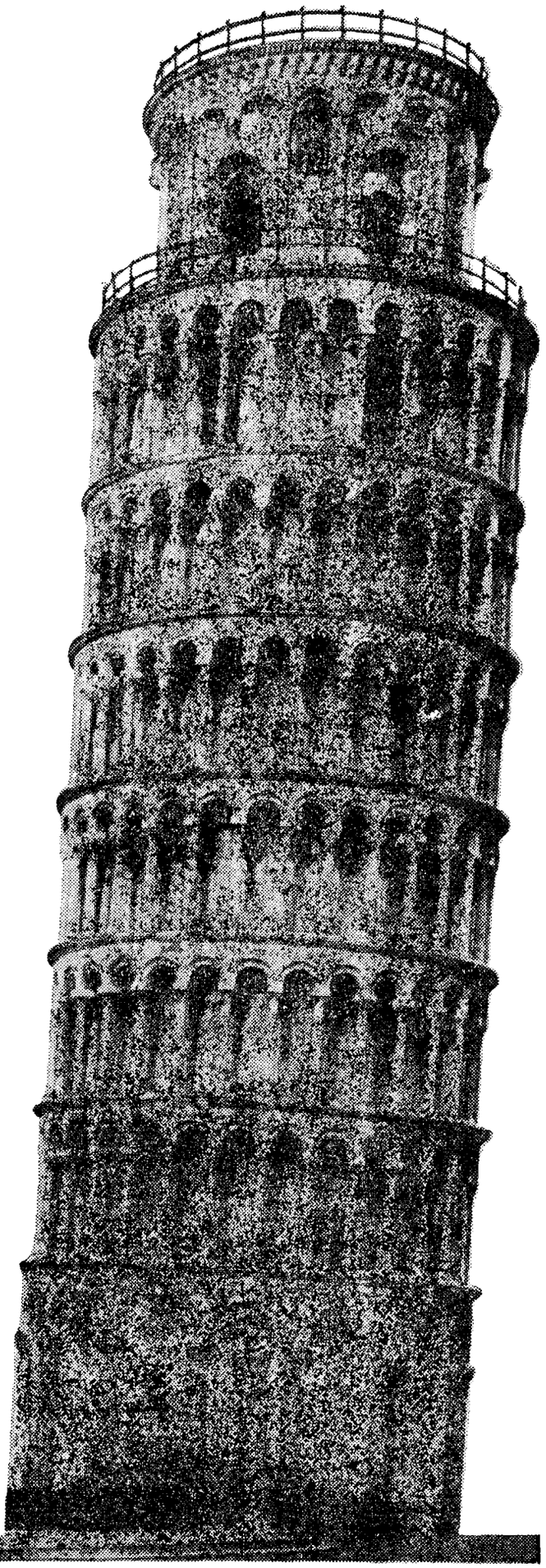

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The
COMMONWEAL

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The Farmer-Labor Appeal

PRESIDENT TRUMAN practices politics with an astonishing and pleasing openness. He does not aspire to the classic school of art which involves concealing art, but rather works in the modern, functional style which exposes to public view and admiration the structural materials and assemblies and the pattern of space and mass and ornament. On Labor Day, the public was asked quite formally to observe his construction of an American Farmer-Labor party: a flat-roofed house on horizontal lines, stark enough in outline to stress its close relationship with the modern International style, but located firmly in Pittsburgh and Des Moines and incorporating several dozen popular American gadgets.

President Truman wants organized labor, and unorganized wage earners also, to vote Democrat in the fall of 1950. He wants farmers to vote the same way. That would leave not many citizens as "selfish interests" to vote against the Democrats. We are approached more according to our economic function than to our geography (local, state and regional interests and prejudices) or our ancestral foreign loyalties, or race, religion, or philosophic point of view. Never have all these other complex motives been so definitely subordinated by an American party seeking a national majority.

The Pittsburgh part appeared easier than the one at Des Moines. Labor is at least a quarter organized, and the unions have vigorous and powerful leaders of their own who are developing ever stronger an economic platform for a labor party. Truman's speech in Pennsylvania was largely a fighting, emotional stirrer-upper, with much name-calling and little exposition of a "line." Green of the AFL and Murray of the CIO and numerous other labor leaders have their economic political appeals well in hand. Truman did not contradict them, but attacked their enemies. The points he interjected broadened the view by bringing in international affairs and national defense, and making mention of country matters like soil conservation and reclamation and grain storage. It was a pep talk in Pittsburgh.

In Des Moines, the problem was more complex. Farmers have no organizations comparable to the labor unions. There is no wide acceptance in agriculture of the same means for economic betterment which labor leaders have espoused. The President spoke of many things, devoting himself far more than in the East to exposition of a program. As far as the organization of farmers goes, he advocated farm cooperatives and credit cooperatives and "the farmer-committee" system. But these could not be shown to parallel very significantly urban labor unions. For most of the definite farm proposals he enumerated—such as research and education, schools, health, electricity, soil conservation, reclamation, grain storage—there was an assumption of federal financing from tax money. Most importantly, he advocated the "production payment plan" of "price support."

"Under this method, the prices of certain farm commodities would be allowed to seek their own level in the market, and the farmer would be paid the difference between the support price and the average market price."

THIS SKETCHY and loose description of the "Brannan Program" is considered the key to the current Democratic effort to line up farmers with urban labor. It appears to involve little direct criticism of the big capitalist system, but to assume a large and unmeasured charge against the going system: taxes would be collected sufficient to meet the spread between the selected "support prices" and the national (and world?) market prices. This may well be the principal unity between the farm and labor appeals. The labor program also assumes a hugely productive capitalism which yields high taxes and enormous federal benefits.

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In Des Moines there was also interesting use made of the word "encourage" (and the President was being very fussy about words like "statism" and "welfare" and "socialism"). The farm program will "*encourage* farmers to grow what is needed and *encourage* consumers to use what is produced." There are many ways to "encourage" somebody to do something. Perhaps the nascent farmer-labor party is to find another unity in the rôle of encourager which it will assign to the federal government. We would like to know more about the means of encouragement anticipated.

President Truman's appeal to the farmers basically assumed something which he only mentioned once in passing. Farmers are to be given the "advantages of modern living" which too often in the past have not been available to them. But the conception of "modern living" reaches beyond economic function and economic class. A steady policy and convincing program cannot be founded upon an analysis which leaves out the general way of life which is built over and above the money income and material security which an exclusively economic platform can, at very best, help to obtain. The Democrats may continue to win elections for some time to come against the kind of opposition they have been meeting these past decades, but they won't create a firm farmer-labor party making us all happy by concentrating narrowly only on the prosperity that might come from access to money collected in taxes.

Findings on the Steel Industry

TO SO comprehensive a report as that just made by the President's fact-finding committee, a wide range of reactions is inevitable. Many business executives and their journals undoubtedly relish the flat recommendation against a wage increase—which would have affected the many industries using steel—and even more the panel's strictures against industry-wide labor agreements.

It had been universally expected that this decision would set the pattern for the settlement of union demands in other industries. Perhaps the magistral tone of the decision—which both sides have accepted as a basis for negotiations—reflects the panel's realization that all eyes were upon them. In any case they have enunciated certain general principles of the widest bearing on the American industrial scene.

One of the most interesting is their view that increases of productivity should primarily be reflected in lower prices for the consumer rather than in higher wages for the worker. And more specifically they maintain that the modernization and expansion made possible by current high profits should enable the steel companies to reduce prices as well as meet the cost of the insurance and pension plans which they have recommended to be borne solely by the companies.

It is the philosophy back of these recommendations that is of the widest general interest. The report underlines the "social obligation which the board finds rests upon industry to provide insurance against the economic hazards of industrial life, including retirement allowances, in an adequate amount as supplementary to the amount of the security furnished by Government." (The immediate object is to provide the worker with $100 a month when he retires at the age of 65.)

The board goes on to describe depreciation in the human "machine" as a part of normal business costs parallel to that of inanimate machinery. This indeed is a reference to the worker in the most impersonal terms, yet it marks a great advance over viewing him merely as an item on a balance sheet—an item of cost to be kept at a very minimum.

Reasons of history and reasons of justice do not explicitly get the play in the findings of David L. Cole, Dr. Carroll R. Daugherty and Judge Samuel I. Rosenman that immediate needs of the nation do. But their report may long serve as a landmark in the American worker's (and industrialist's) coming of age.

Segregation

IT IS EASY to embrace the Negro in the North, where it can be done discreetly, where people don't care so much. It takes a good deal of courage in the South. The problem is not altogether segregation, but those people who think white bodies are superior and should not be permitted near the black. Southerners are not alone in these delusions (as Mrs. Roosevelt told the Southern churchwomen), but they have the best opportunity to display their ignorance in the reassuring company of the other ignorant.

The recent occasions when they have done so have reached a most disturbing number, but there is reason to hope that this activity is frantic because it is unpopular. Bigots do not have the tacit approval of Southern communities. There is unquestionably a majority of Southerners opposed to the mistreatment, and the political and economic exploitation of Negroes. The churchwomen plan to ". . . visit courts, examine public records, study functions of police departments, take complaints of civil rights violations to local and Federal judges and to grand juries." This general sympathy does not yet extend to the momentous admission of Negro social equality; it is rather the go-with-your-cook-to-the-polls sort of action the churchwomen also planned; a sympathy which is not to be scorned, but which is yet far from brotherhood in Christ.

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Would you want your sister to marry a Negro? The number of Southerners who can swallow 'tradition' and reply "yes, if she loves him and is willing to pay the price the discriminations of society will exact" has increased far beyond what a casual observer would think. These Southerners can employ such effective tactics as enlisting Negroes and whites in common projects. (A government survey of combat troops recently cited by Elmo Roper, shows that support of the Army's segregation policies was greatest among troops who had little contact with Negro units; and was least—was, in fact, almost non-existent—among troops who had served with Negroes in combat at company and platoon levels).

There are enough of these Southerners to have formed a Regional Council that stands without equivocation for equality and non-segregation. There are enough of them to extend the activities of the Urban League into the South ("The fact is that we are able to get more and more people of stature to work with us" says the director of the Southern Field Division of the League). There are even some of these Southerners who are willing to live in our South the social doctrine of the Catholic Church.

Loan to Yugoslavia

GIVING A twenty million dollar loan to Marshal Tito, so the Export-Import Bank believes, is economically a good risk, whereas a similar loan to Franco Spain would not be. Here the Bank's distinction between monetary risks is indeed delicate. The economics behind this distinction make sense only in the light of politics.

Tito, a dictator whose regime deserves no more encouragement than Franco's, is really not in a safer economic position, but he happens to be in a uniquely favorable spot for our purposes: as a Marxist and a nationalist, he is what amounts to a guerrilla fugitive from international Marxism who has taken to his private Communist hills. With this loan, the US hopes to keep him there; the strategy of passing supplies to a rebel insurrection that may increase and multiply is not unfamiliar to Moscow—but this one is within the evolving world-state of Communism.

It is the State Department, more than the Bank, that assumes the risk in this loan. Tito, whose unpardonable offense is that he aspires to be a Stalin, is not the ideal insurrectionist against Marxism. Politically his heart is set on the same totalitarian world materialism that our foreign policy is designed to resist. In supporting him we are, if we were to be strictly logical, in the long run financing our own undoing.

The money so far loaned to Yugoslavia is to purchase a steel mill and mining machinery, all essential to Tito's Five Year Plan for industrializing his country. His objective, then, is the Western one of an industrial economy that requires for its prosperity an exchange of products on the world markets. Since the Western industrial nations already are searching for markets, it is unlikely that Tito can trade in the West in other than raw materials. The most probable direction for Yugoslav trade in manufactured goods will be Eastward. For this to happen, Yugoslavia and the East will first have to make peace—thus defeating the purpose of our present loan. In contributing to Tito's Five Year Plan, we may ourselves force Yugoslavia to look to the East for markets after she has industrialized herself with Western capital-loans.

At the moment this is not a threatening prospect for us because Yugoslavia is not yet industrialized and Tito is scarcely in a position to make peace with Stalin by recanting his deviations. But Yugoslavia can hardly hold permanently to her present course: she does not have friendly relations with a single bordering country, she compromises her Communist economics by taking money from the greedy capitalists of the West, and Tito has earned the unforgiving wrath of the East. In whatever way a reconciliation is worked out to bring Yugoslavia back into the world from her impossible fugitive retreat, it will almost surely work to our peril: if Tito is then in power, it is unthinkable that he will forget his Marxism or his hatred of the West, and if he is not in power, Russia will fill the vacuum.

At this stage of the Yugoslavia affair, the State Department has taken the practical and irresistible gamble of prolonging the present crisis and letting the eventualities take care of themselves. However, one must have a gambler's recklessness to believe that Tito will not be at our throats at his first opportunity. As long as he is the rebel leader against the Russians within the Marxist community it is impossible to think that this loan will not one day come back on us by increasing and multiplying the Marxist evil it is meant to forestall.

Why Health Insurance?

WHO WOULD DENY that under the present dispensation millions of Americans do not have adequate medical care? Exactly how many is a matter of dispute. According to Oscar Ewing's report to the President calling for national health insurance, half the population find it hard, if not impossible, to obtain routine medical care. But whatever the exact figure, it is obvious that millions of families do not have sufficient margin to have the doctor when they should.

Although no one claims that every family can now obtain requisite medical care, there are peo-

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ple who say that the system of private medicine itself has very little to do with it. A current pamphlet from the American Medical Association holds that basically it goes back to a matter of choice. This "Analyis of the Ewing Report" declares that the American people spend one and one half times as much for recreation—which might, by the way, have some beneficent effect on health—as they do to secure medical services. Besides that, they also spend one and one-half times as much for "alcoholic beverages." So, if we were more puritanically constituted and fonder of going to the doctor's, a lot more of us could afford treatment than Mr. Ewing thinks!

Aside from normal medical expenses there are those serious illnesses which bring with them the burden of extraordinary expense. I dare say that there is not a reader of these pages who has not experienced personally or heard from intimate friends the staggering cost of some serious illness. Therefore, the problem is twofold: financing annual medical costs—now beyond a sizable percentage of the population—and building up, for all but the very wealthiest families, reserves for unforeseen major sicknesses.

LOGICALLY THE simplest thing is to turn the job over to the State. The argument, as presented in rudimentary fashion in Volume X, Number 8 of the CIO's *Economic Outlook*, runs like this: "Illness often strikes individuals without warning, but for large groups of people, it is easy to predict how much sickness there will be, say, in a year. Then if everyone in a large group regularly contributes a little to the common fund, each family unfortunate enough to be stricken with illness will be able to get the right kind of medical care when it is needed. The bigger you make the group, the less each individual has to pay because then you're spreading the risk more. That's why the government should create one big medical insurance system for everybody." Why stop there? How about a world health insurance system?

An alternative to this government health insurance is voluntary, or cooperative, group medicine. Thus far in this country it has reached its most extensive development in the field of hospitalization—the Blue Cross and similar plans have in the last two or three years experienced a phenomenal growth. Such plans do, however, take care of but a minor portion of a family's medical expenses. That is why the AMA pamphlet just referred to is misleading when it cites the cost of Blue Cross-Blue Shield membership as twenty cents a day and later concludes: "The present day test for millions of Americans is the ability to *prepay* the price of a package of cigarets a day."

Senator James E. Murray criticizes the Health Insurance Council's figures on the number of Americans enrolled in voluntary hospital plans for including too many duplications. But even if we make due allowance for this factor, an impressive number of people have signed up. That one out of every four Americans has surgical expense insurance is no negligible statistic. The promising aspect of voluntary plans is their accelerated pace—both in enrolling new members and in extending the services subscribed for. To argue the case on the basis of present numbers or the services now available on most hospital-medical plans is to ignore the possibilities for rapid development along voluntary-cooperative lines. Naturally the continued spread of voluntary plans is strictly dependent on the soundness of the general economy. An adequate wage is essential if all workers are to be able to subscribe to the plan. And since the House and Senate have adopted a 75 cents an hour minimum, this new scale is expected to go into effect in 1950.

NOW AMERICAN doctors as a group are among the most charitable and socially-minded of our citizens. The extremists who have constituted themselves spokesmen for the AMA and stubbornly resisted Blue Cross techniques and every other change do not represent the views of the generality of the profession. Although a recent development has been the medical specialist who seems more intent on personal wealth and renown than anything else, the vast majority of our physicians and surgeons seem imbued with the ideals that animated the celebrated American country doctor. They take on numerous patients who are unable to pay, are lenient with others and donate regularly of their time and skills in free hospital clinics.

Why is it then that these men are overwhelmingly opposed to federal health insurance? Some of them have had experience with the Armed Forces. Others from a sound instinct reject the idea of becoming part of the world of civil servants with its mazes of red tape and official forms. No doubt many wonder why the medical profession should be singled out to redress certain major failings in our economic system. In its present form the proposed National Health Insurance and Public Health Act takes into account many of the objections which the medical profession has raised since the first trial balloon was raised by the Murray-Dingell Bill. But essentially the present bill embodies a principle which the bulk of our doctors reject.

The issue comes down to this. Senator Murray, telling of the virtues of his plan, declares: "It would not change the practice of medicine but only the way in which we pay for medical care." To go ahead on that assumption would be flying directly in the face of experience. For who pays the bills inevitably calls the tune.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN.

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Journey for Forty Italian Children

Report of a vacation trip to England that opened the eyes of some young travellers

Peter Thompson

THE FIRST was Giovanni. At half past six in the morning, when the truck drew up to his house in a village on the plain near Imola, he was ready at the gate with a neat little fiber case just big enough to hold a typist's lunch. It was the first time I had seen him in shoes. He looked uncannily clean and, for once, his thirteen years. He had big teeth and eyes that directed their vision too close to his nose. He was hollow chested: his legs looked thin and brittle enough to break across one's knee.

Giovanni was going to England for a two months' holiday—one of forty children from provinces in Northern Italy that English families, through the organization International Help for Children, had invited to their homes. All the children were from poor families who had suffered badly during the war. Since early in 1948, International Help for Children had been organizing similar trips for very much larger groups of Dutch, French, Belgian and German children.

This Italian group was something of an experiment. If the trip went well, many more Italian children would be selected for another one in 1950—so one explained soothingly to those who complained at not going in 1949. There were, however, in the Bologna Province, not many who complained. For one thing the Bolognese take life as it comes and don't make a habit of shouting "unfair!" For another, and this was to be noticed especially in the remoter country parts, the Communists were able to convince the population that England, a capitalist place of suffering at any time, was going to be at its very worst in the summer of 1949 when the war provoked by Truman and the signatories of the Atlantic Pact was inevitably to begin. Because of such arguments a number of parents retracted the permission they had at first gladly given for their children's holiday.

Giovanni, apart from a natural disposition to resist knowledge, had spent far too many school hours looking after younger brothers and sisters to be able to form any considered anticipations of life in England. He was sceptical of the information given by the UNRRA/CASAS social welfare assistant that a Channel crossing was a matter of hours not days; and he doubted his neighbors (on whose houses was chalked Down With the Atlantic Pact) who were certain he had been trapped into two months' labor at harvesting for the capitalists.

He waited at his gate with the same untroubled levity as for a market day jaunt into Imola. His mother was more preoccupied, though she tried not to show it. He was to be sure to write the moment he had safely crossed the sea. He was to eat half a lemon during the voyage. He was to go to Mass while he was in England and to show the people with whom he would be living that he knew his manners. The importance of these and other duties was impressed upon him while she cut slices of a dry sugar pastry and her husband poured out little glasses of a sweet home-made liqueur tinted with cochineal, with which we drank success to the journey.

★

WHEN the round-up of the selected children was continued, Giovanni took a two-inch thick slice of bread from his case and with dogged interest began to eat. Most of the children were from homes like Giovanni's—airy, spacious but for the most part painfully bare UNRRA/CASAS houses, to which they had not long since been moved from stable cellar and refugee camp. All of them had lived the last seven months of the war on a battlefield. With their parents and relatives they had hidden in dug-outs while bombardments overhead disputed for the last bastions of the German Gothic Line.

Not all of them had suffered the personal disasters of, for instance, Martino Ruggeri, one of the children from Pianoro, the most war-damaged commune in all Italy.

Martino Ruggeri's father had already been deported to a labor camp in Germany when Martino and his three brothers, his mother and her three brothers had to start living in a mud cave scraped out of the mountainside above the village where their home had been. During their six months in the cave, one of Martino's uncles was taken hostage by the Germans in reprisal for a partisan attack. Another uncle who had gone out to find potatoes for the hungry family was killed by a shell. The third was blown up by a mine. The dampness of the cave and of the filthy and, in winter, bitterly cold refugee camp that

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had once been a barracks and before that a convent, where the Ruggeri family had to live for two years, gave Martino's mother arthritis and TB. She cried when it was time for her son to begin his holiday. "They say I'm mad to let him go," she said. "They say the English will never allow him to come back to Italy." "They" were Communist neighbors.

★

BY THE river bank in Pianoro there is a white-washed bungalow with red beams and green shutters. It has a garden with scented stocks and begonias in front, and behind, sloping down to the stony river bed (only a trickle of water flows in the summer), a small new vineyard; and on a patch of grass there is a shed with a clamorous bell with a trip-wire attached to give warning of any attempt to steal the tethered ewe that lies inside when the sun gets too hot.

Guido Rocca divides his time fairly evenly between the home and the garden, the children and the ewe. He built the house himself with construction units that he knocked together from old gasoline tins, ammunition boxes and other battlefield bric-a-brac, and the beams of abandoned dug-outs. The fine loam for his vineyard he carted from a wrecked railway tunnel. The battlefield from which he took his construction units was three kilometres away high up on the mountainside and he had no means of transporting them except a tiny cart with field telephone wire reels to serve as wheels—they had to be changed every couple of days because the surface of the mountain track banged them to pieces. He spent most of two years making his house and garden. A long time, but he was handicapped by a bad winter and by having only one arm.

He is a tinker by trade and still mends saucepans for the neighbors. He also makes a little money on the vegetables he grows. He has borrowed to raise a pig and has a couple of angora rabbits. It is a frugal life that he and his family live, but I have rarely encountered a more confident one. They were of Pianoro before the war and against everyone's prediction they are living there again. It is their place, and for once one of those shaming middle-class euphemisms is discovered to be doing service in plain words to the dignity and goodness of men: they know their place.

Rocca made it clear, from the moment that it was suggested that his son Giacomo should go to England, that much as he appreciated all the advantages of this holiday, they did not count if it should not prove possible for Giacomo to go to Mass. He was reassured on this point. Similar reassurances had to be given to a surprising number of the parents in this, by election figures at least, heavily Communist province.

From a five-acre field below the house where the Pierantonis had once lived at Tossignano, 16,000 mines were lifted after the war. Of Tossignano itself, only broken walls remained. Some repairs have since been made. There is a school again and an osteria. The wrought iron and stone well head commissioned by Saint Charles Borromeo has been re-made. The Pierantonis, eight of them, have come back by way of what might almost be called the usual channels—dug out and refugee camp—to an UNRRA/CASAS house in the valley below Tossignano. Everything else about their life has changed, but they still gather in the living room each night to intone the Litany of Our Lady before going to bed.

The eight-year-old twins, Maria Teresa and Maria Vittoria, were waiting for the truck in their Sunday best, with a battered but fair-sized suitcase between them. They did not travel far before they both were quietly sick. They changed into their one other dress in the UNRRA/CASAS office in Bologna, where also very explicit labels were attached to all the children and their baggage; and the doctor gave them a last look over to make sure no illness had been contracted since his other and more stringent examination a month before. After this they called on the Cardinal Archbishop who repeated some of the injunctions of their mothers' and sent them off with a blessing.

★

AT half past two that morning, when I had finished packing, I once more went through —by nervous compulsion rather than any other motive—the heap of necessary documents for the children's journey.

Three Italian social workers had been chosen as leaders to accompany the children, to act as liaison between them and their hosts in England, to take them to Mass, to see that they wrote home regularly, to distribute their pocket money (each child was given 3 shillings a week for sweets, stamps and self-respect) and in general to smooth out the small vexations that were likely to arise on this trip to a foreign land.

The send-off from Bologna station was poisoned, for me at least, by trouble over the passport that I had only in copy instead of in original.

The children were given food from the packing case full of biscuits, orange juice and lemons (to prevent sickness), tinned Argentine beef and bread. The two children that had to be picked up at Reggio Emilia were waiting on the wrong platform. The six from Massa-Carrara, who were waiting at Parma, were all in tears. The twins were sick again and the more venturesome of them, Maria Teresa, was only just in time prevented from spending some of her tightly clutched lire on an ice cream immediately afterwards. When the ticket collector came I discovered that

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I had neglected to provide myself with a ticket.

At Milan the passport copy was made respectable. The French Red Cross at Modane provided an excellent supper, sent a telegram to London to announce "all's well" so far, and put us on the train for Paris.

The three leaders and I kept each other awake throughout the night in order to accompany the children when they wanted to go to the lavatory, since of the three identical doors at the end of the coach (an ancient wooden type) one opened into the lavatory and two out on to the track. Only the lavatory door could be locked. One of the La Spezia children—one of those from a mountain village, Calice di Cornoviglio, who had never seen a train before and could not at first be persuaded to get into one—opened the wrong door soon after we left Modane, but one of the leaders was there to pull her back.

★

A FEW DAYS before the journey, an Italian acquaintance had read to me, with enormous amusement, a newspaper account of a man who had stretched his hand out of a carriage window to flick off the ash of a cigarette and had had four fingers torn off by a train passing in the opposite direction. The children seemed determined to suffer likewise. All the way from Bologna the three leaders and I had been yanking in arms and heads, grimly shutting windows (and having to open them again because of the heat), instituting sanctions (no more ice cream) but to very little effect. Finally, to Giovanni, who seemed the most determined of all to get cut off (literally) at an early age, I related in every horrific detail what had happened to the man with a cigarette. Giovanni drew in his arm reluctantly, then explained that there was on this part of the line only a single track.

There were some fifty Italian emigrants on the train. Some of them listened with obvious emotion to the children singing Santa Lucia. Others, less impressionable, merely resented that the children had seats and they hadn't. The children had not in fact enough seats (the French railways only reserve half a seat for children paying half-fare) and in consequence slept all of a bundle like rabbits. Their feet were black because they could not at any time be persuaded to keep their shoes on in the train. They persisted in this preference later in England and often, when they were invited out to tea, would walk barefooted along the country roads, carrying their shoes which were put on at the gate of their host's garden.

At Paris the French Red Cross provided our breakfast and transport across the city to the train for Dieppe. Some English girl bicyclists wearing shorts provided the children with speculation on the marvels they were to find in England.

The Channel crossing, however, dulled their expectations. The ship, yes that looked big and white enough: and so many rooms and stairways that they at once proceeded to explore them all before the adults of the party, busy counting luggage and lemons, could stop them. But the sea! How immeasurably much bigger and how inconstant! Some of the children were rounded up for lemons but they were sick as quickly and as thoroughly as the others.

I had left at the beginning of the distribution of lemons to give tickets to the purser, who in return gave me 42 landing forms (with such leading questions about the children as, Their Professions?) which had to be filled in before the ship reached Newhaven. This was a task I had not anticipated and I returned a good deal peeved to the deck, where some of the children were bent with unhappy intentions over the side and one of the leaders was explaining to a passenger that her dress had not been spoiled by the child *deliberately*. Over the next half-hour or so landing forms were forgotten while children were collected from different parts of the ship (several had unfortunately chosen the first-class salon to be sick in) and transferred to places where they could lie down with basins. It was no fault of ours, but of the ship's designers, that we had to march seven times through the third-class restaurant with tearful and retching little groups.

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AFTER this, one of the leaders and I found, with difficulty, space at a table and at great speed we got the landing forms completed just before the ship tied up at her squalid little destination. Newhaven looks as if it had been pushed up in great contempt and hurry one night for excursionists who were to be made to feel that theirs was, after all, the Cheapest Route to the Continent. It is not the town one would choose to display to a foreign guest as his first sight of England. But to the Italian children those sheds and those terraces of artisans' dwellings meant land and they were delighted. One of them wet his trousers in excitement. When the small cardboard case in which he carried his possessions was opened, it was found to contain only a shirt, a pair of sandals, a bar of soap and a missal.

None of the children had signed the landing forms, but that did not matter. Nor did it matter that there were no copies (in duplicate) of the collective passports. The lists (in duplicate) of the children's names and villages, that I had compiled for my own information, did as well. Anything (in duplicate) goes, said the cheerful port official.

The journey to London—after a calm tea in the railway buffet—speedily reduced memories

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of the Channel crossing. When it had once and for all been shown that nobody's luggage had been left behind at Newhaven (there were some tears while the delusion lasted) everyone gave his attention to remarking on the comfort of English third-class travel in comparison with French. Some instinct of national salesmanship prevented my pointing out that it cost three times as much.

At London there were the Italian Consul, the BBC recording van, members of International Help for Children, and journalists. The children had just time to realize there were sweets and biscuits in the paper bags they had been given on leaving the train; to smile for photographs and not to be afraid of the magnesium flares; to whisper into a microphone messages to their mothers and fathers; and then off they went in taxi and motor coach to their destinations. Twenty-five of them to a country house in Surrey, where they were to have a month's physical building up and mental relaxation before going into the homes of the families that had asked for them (these 25 were, rather surprisingly, discovered to be in a lower state of general health than any other party of children previously received), the others direct to their hosts in a London suburb.

For a day or two there was nostalgia and timidity and then began the letters home that have already prompted the neighbors who prophesied exploitation and war to ask if their children can go on next year's trip. Martino Ruggeri, whose parting from the family had been among the tensest, wrote after a week that he had after all decided to live in England and return to see his mother once every year. Giovanni mentioned in the midst of a somewhat breathless account of the monkeys and camels at the zoo that he was getting as fat as a balloon.

Picture, Sentiment, and Symbol

An architect talks of the spirit of communities and churches

Joseph Hudnut

WHEN at a tender age I began the practice of architecture I accepted, being in those days without conscience, a number of commissions for churches. I built many churches. I call this my Early Christian Period.

At first I built stone churches in the Gothic style. As I look back upon these I find them more Goodhue than Gothic: the point is that I believed them to be Gothic. I held that faith not merely because I shared at that time the generous illusions of the Gothic Revivalists but also because I was very young. *Folie de jeunesse.* I believed that Goodhue was carrying forward the tradition of Canterbury; and indeed he was doing so, but in a manner which I had not as yet understood.

For several years the beautiful little temples of Goodhue and Cram reappeared, somewhat faded to be sure, on my drafting board and were retranslated into three-dimensional pictures in stone, complete with the lush ivy which cloaked the Goodhue buttresses and the birds which at his invitation quaintly nested in the towers.

I might have gone on indefinitely building these pictures, had it not been for my clients. My clients were not indifferent to the felicities of this, my private Heaven, but they were equally conscious of a useful task here and now to be performed, and they could not always understand the way in which that task shattered the romantic pattern which had taken so firm a possession of my imagination. They wanted, for example, an expansion of the educational and social facilities for which the Gothic tradition offered no precedent. They wanted modernizations in planning and simplifications in ceremonials which threw my compositions completely out of balance; and their disinclination to pay for masonry vaulting was positive in the extreme. I blamed, not the Gothic tradition or my own misconceptions of it, but the intransigeance of my clients for the disasters which followed.

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I HAVE confessed my sin not so much to obtain absolution as to point a moral. I was not, I fear, the only architect to design pictures rather than buildings. I hope that no one will think that I admire less sincerely the form and the tradition of Gothic architecture—and yet I am not sure but what the program of my clients might have formed a better foundation for my art. At any rate, I am sure that it would have formed a better foundation than that excess of

This is an excerpt from Mr. Hudnut's forthcoming book "Architecture and the Spirit of Man", to be published by the Harvard Press, Cambridge.

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pictorialism which was the almost universal anodyne of architects in that day.

It should be understood that I am thinking not so much of the habit of seeing buildings pictorially as of the habit of designing them pictorially. As long as there are Cook's Tours and castles on the Rhine, people will look for and find picturesque charm in buildings; and why not in buildings near to our homes? People "of good taste and an Anglican inheritance," for example, are sure to desire such qualities in a country church. They will take pleasure in the scenic effect of a rambling parish house set against the bolder masses of tower and transept, in a spire rising over great trees, in splashes of light on textured masonry. Such a manner of seeing does not necessarily prohibit an apprehension of the more austere and sculptural values of buildings —of those "patterns of solid form set in space with space around"—provided of course that the architect has created such values and made them accessible.

The trouble is that many architects, at any rate at the time when I was an architect, did forget to create such values. The completed picture leaped into our minds almost before the first line had been put on paper and continued its subconscious tyranny over plan and structure; and no theme of architecture, unless it be the skyscraper, was so vulnerable to that tyranny as the church. We thought in pictures, remembering the gray abbeys of Picardy and La Beauce, and built our churches out of the pages of our sketchbooks.

In that way we often sacrificed not only the energies of three-dimensional pattern but also the vitality and command which buildings have when their use and social reference are firmly established in their outward shapes. I do not think that churches are an exception to that principle, so fundamental in all architecture. Churches, in spite of the slow changes in ceremonial usages, can be alienated from their environment as readily as any other buildings by qualities of design. The tower of Norwich rising over a Nebraska prairie, a fragment of Aquitaine under the elevated railway: these do not (I hope) clarify the relationship of the Church to contemporary society.

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I HAVE seldom seen a church which was pictorially designed that did not suffer from an excessive tincture of romantic sentiment. There is a language of form by no means doctrinal in nature which has come to have a wide currency in this country, a language made up of architectural elements used without respect to their meanings as architecture. That awkward buttress placed where no buttress is needed with intent to give an air of rural ingenuousness, the turret through which the lone sexton climbs into the belfry (the electrical machinery being out of order), craftsmanship expensively homespun and windows quaintly paned: these are fragments of romance too blurred by associations to play a part in an architectural ensemble. We cannot see them objectively.

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OF ALL architectural forms, the spire is, I think, the most sentimental: not perhaps the majestic spires of cathedrals in great cities, but certainly the smaller spires which people our thousands of smaller cities. I spent all of one summer designing a spire—and unless an architect has designed one he can have no idea how exacting are the requirements in mass, transition, shadow, and silhouette—but I am sure that the citizens of the town in which it stands have never looked at it. They know through associations that a church ought to have a spire; they *feel* its presence; it comforts them with the knowledge that everything has been done properly. Perhaps that is all we should expect of a spire.

There are architectural clichés as well as verbal ones: preserved sentimentalities which become the small change of church design like the thousand and one pietisms of ecclesiastical conversation. These are so familiar that we no longer take any note of them. They are like the prayer which was pronounced each Sunday by the minister who, when I was a boy, was always our guest after the morning service. My mother would load the table with good things to eat—a goose when geese were in season and a roast, a spiced ham, fruits, vegetables, and sweets—and then Dr. MacConochie, folding his hands across his generous waistcoat, would say, in that same voice in which the raven spoke to Edgar Allan Poe, "Oh Lord . . . For these few morsels of which we are to partake . . . we thank Thee . . . And may they sustain us, Oh Lord, until the evening repast . . ."

"Few morsels!" my mother would say afterwards, "Few morsels! . . . a whole jar of my best crabapple jelly!"

My mother did not understand that "few morsels" and "evening repast" were stylistic elements wholly devoid of contemporaneousness. They were used in precisely the same sense as the homely trimmings on the church built for Dr. MacConochie in our Michigan town by an expensive Chicago architect. It took the good Presbyterian thirty years to pay the mortgage on that "humble edifice."

Picture and romance, even when they are used in large doses, seldom destroy completely an architectural pattern. Symbolism, however, is another matter. I mean, of course, the excessive use of forms having a doctrinal significance and

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especially the tendency to discover such meanings in this or that type of building construction.

There is a kind of architectural as well as ecclesiastical obscurantism and these sometimes get so mixed up together as completely to defeat all apprehension of structural or spatial pattern. The Church speaks to us in symbols and has of course every need to do so, and yet I could wish sometimes that these might be used with a greater understanding of the equally evocative language of architecture. There is a sense in which a church building is itself a symbol, one of its functions being to play a part in ceremonial, but I cannot think that this circumstance justifies all that is implied by "diacritical design."

We architects and not the clergy are to blame for the notion of architectural style as symbol. We are prone to evangelize our clients, to indoctrinate them in some architectural creed. We have told them unblushingly what is and what is not Christian architecture—as if it were not *their* business to tell *us*. The clergy have proved to be apt pupils.

Now we are hoist with our own petard. That instruction which we gave the priest, the priest now repeats to us. Questions of architectural form and technique, which ought to be the prime business of architects, are lifted into the field of religion and resolved by considerations wholly alien to architecture.

Not long ago when I visited the Cathedral of St. John the Divine I asked one of the young men attached to that cathedral to explain the purpose of the transept, then under construction. He said in reply that the transept would pull into harmony the existing nave and sanctuary (a striking example of our renewed belief in miracles) and would also give the cathedral plan the shape of the cross, a symbol which by its permanence and grandeur would confirm the faith of thousands.

Now it seems quite evident that these two purposes, either of which would obviously justify the expenditure of a million or two of charitable dollars, have very little to do with each other. The first is architectural in intent. It is concerned with relations of space and of mass and with an objective, or sensible, unity. The second is pure spirit. The relation between them, that is to say between architecture and symbol, is not a necessary one. One could exist without the other, surely. It should be possible to disentangle them.

You cannot argue with symbols. They find their way to our hearts immediately or not at all. Suppose, for example, I should crown a rock of Morningside with a swastika of giant size. No architecture, I think, would make you love it. You would destroy it. I might tell you that its proportions are exquisite, that its form and rhythms invite you to the most abiding of contemplative pleasures— you would destroy it just the same. —My dear sir, my swastika is skilfully made of priceless materials: of chrysoberyl, of fine gold, of the very best creamery butter. —To hell with it, you would say. —Sir, all the scholars of Columbia University have conjoined to make my swastika the most perfect exemplar of Moresque art. —Smash it, and smash it quickly.

No architecture can protect a symbol; nor is there any symbol which owes its life to architecture—still less to any particular style of architecture. If we love a symbol we will call it beautiful; if we hate it, no art can make it less hateful. The soldiers of Cromwell wept with joy as the lovely windows of Litchfield crashed under the blows of their vengeful lances; and Ferdinand, Most Catholic King of Spain, did not perceive until he had destroyed half of it, that the Alhambra was harmoniously built and full of grace.

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IT SHOULD be understood that I admit picture, sentiment, and symbol as fountains of architecture. I would have people more, not less, sensitive to the pictorial qualities of buildings and I should think it strange indeed if sentiment and symbol were not integral to objects so intimately fused into human life. To be afraid of sentiment is to be afraid of life.

It happens, nevertheless, that there are many kinds of picture, sentiment, and symbol. Some of these obscure architecture and defeat its eloquence; others seem to make architecture all the more evocative by their presence. We may, for example, project upon buildings pictorial relationships which spring into our minds from associations which are wholly irrelevant, except through the inconsequential caprices of the memory, to the building which stands before us; but we may also create for ourselves and out of that building a picture which will confirm rather than destroy its essential character. In like manner we may pour over our new building a sentiment distilled from the past or draw from it the more genuine sentiment of its purpose; and we may crown it with symbols which are living or dead, which reaffirm or deny the meaning of its architecture.

People sometimes ask me to describe the kind of church I would build today, assuming that I were absolutely obliged to build a church. I should like to answer: a church charged with whatever sentiment might be entertained by my client. I am by no means sure that I should not build—only, I hope, with greater competence—in the Gothic style, just as I did thirty years ago. I should not hope to give my building a modernity of expression unless I were sure of a modernity of sentiment shared by those for whom my church is built.

I am sure that I could not make my church modern by means of glass blocks and corner win-

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dows, nor could I ask my client to believe that flat roofs, giant cantilevers, and machine-made ornament will bring his building, or his religion, into harmony with our age; nor should I find it my duty to astonish him, in the name of architecture, with parabolic vaults, floating walls, and chapels lifted on *pilotis*. Without a Christianity informed by that same sentiment for modernity which nourishes our modern architecture—I mean a Christianity integral to our world, *secular*, militant, and clairvoyant—we will not get very far in church architecture with our new vocabulary of shapes. It is not enough that such sentiment should color the creed of an architect.

An architect who had built many fine churches once wrote in one of his essays: "The difference between Hudnut and me is that he thinks there is something fine about this modern world—I don't."

There were many other differences between us, for he was one of the most distinguished of American architects; but I think that he expresses with great clarity the essential difference between traditional and modern architecture.

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I DO NOT question the sentiment which is raising great medieval cathedrals at Washington, at Liverpool, and on the Rock of Morningside. Sentiments about buildings do not have to be rational to be genuine. That is a truth, by the way, which is quite as apposite to Cape Cod cottages as to cathedrals; and indeed I think it a happy augury for architecture that people should care enough about that art to ornament our bleak cities with splashes of medieval splendor and to wreathe them with white romantic cottages. We have less to fear from such constructions than from that acrobatic modernity which imitates, without knowing the meaning of any of them, every *coup-de-maître* of Le Corbusier.

My students sometimes believe that a sentiment for ancient and modern buildings cannot exist side by side in the same mind. Actually the existence of the one implies the other; and those persons who understand modern architecture best and who have been most deeply touched by its achievements and its promise are almost always those who have approached it through the disciplines of history; nor is it necessary that we should erase from our minds all romance, all make-believe, all unreasonable delights in order that we may love that which is real and present before us.

When I was in Cleveland recently I was shown a section of that city occupied by immigrants from the Ukraine: a square mile or so of squalor extending westward from that deep valley, filled with steel and fire, which cleaves the city as if it had been struck a savage blow with a great axe. At the edge of this valley a church, brought here surely from the Black Sea, lanterned the sky with five golden onion-shaped domes; while below it, tumbling down the slope of the valley, there lay a housing project newly built by a government solicitous of social regeneration.

Now, I am, I believe, thoroughly persuaded of the rightness of modern architecture. My interest in the evolving patterns of our buildings seldom deserts me and I take infinite delight in the discovery of a contemporary spirit working within them. Nevertheless I did not observe the plan or the structure of that church. It may or may not have been logical or correct. I saw it, as I am sure the people who live about it see it, as picture, sentiment, and symbol. As picture, a spot of color giving life to a dull landscape; as sentiment, a splinter of sunshine from distant fields of wheat; and as symbol, a flag raised by sailors adrift on a wide and uncertain sea. I am afraid that I did not look for either function or form.

In truth, the church, with its five shining crosses, half Greek and half Tartar, almost seduced me from the housing project I had come to see. It was only after I had walked for some time among the neat row houses, each with its hedged garden and its view, examined in detail their honest reticent shapes set in space and sun, and talked at the community house with the women who were there sustaining our civilization, that it occurred to me that here also were buildings illumined not less than the gilded church by purpose and faith. Here also was picture, sentiment, and symbol.

Communications

Thoreau and the State

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I wish to take issue with C. Carroll Hollis' article, "Thoreau and the State," published in your issue of September 9. It is too glibly assumed nowadays that one is unorthodox if he rejects the State as a desirable instrument of government. I am not one to claim that because Saint Thomas has written thus it is settled, but I shall quote from Saint Thomas in this instance to show that according to this theologian it is possible to be anti-State, in fact Christian-anarchist, and still be quite orthodox.

In Saint Thomas' "Treatise On Law," question 90, 3rd article, he states: "I answer that, a law, properly speaking, regards first and foremost the order to the common good. Now to order anything to the common good, belongs *either* to the whole people, or to someone who is the viceregent of the whole people. And therefore the making of a law belongs either to the whole people or to a public personage who has care of the whole

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people: since in all other matters the directing of anything to the end concerns him to whom the end belongs."

Furthermore, as, according to the usual Thomist contention, authority comes from God to the people as a whole—then, using this argument of Saint Thomas, there is no obligation on the people to delegate that authority and they may retain it as an absolute democracy instead of delegating it as in representative democracy or rule by the majority. Saint Thomas allows either alternative. So, while one may not agree with the process by which Thoreau arrives at his anti-State position, it cannot be maintained that to accept Thoreau's conclusion is impossible for the Catholic.

The type of democracy defended by Mr. Hollis provides all the theoretical foundation necessary for fascism. He states, "the judicial power of legitimate government necessarily deals with problems of right and wrong, and decides against even the sincere but misguided claims of *some* consciences while it vindicates those of another." This is just as Rosseauistic as the contention he attributes to Thoreau. And, in making the State the determiner of morality, and the will of the majority supreme, his view nowise differs from the fascists, who all claim majority support and likewise exalt the State to a position of arbiter of morals.

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AS RANDOLPH BOURNE has shown in his treatise on "The State," it is an error to confuse the State with government or with the nation or with country. It is but one form of government. The nation and the country is composed of those who dwell together with a common language, common background and culture. The State, on the contrary, is a purely political entity which very often ignores the nation in determining boundaries, etc. Therefore, to reject the State is not to reject all government. The Christian anarchist rejects an hierarchical arrangement of civil society while accepting such an arrangement in the Church, because the Church is essentially the conveyor of supernatural truth and of necessity employs authority. But in civil matters the people are not bound to release their authority to other than the community as a whole.

The explanation of Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians iii. 16-22 in the St. Andrew Missal states: "But Christians know only the law of the Gospel, the law of liberty and love. . . . The law of Moses, which came to add to the promise by imposing burdensome precepts . . . did not come to abrogate the promise, since, far from justifying man the law shows only too clearly, by its lack of power to assist in the fulfilment of its prescriptions, how sin is the absolute master of all creatures; while, on the contrary, faith in Christ quickens souls by giving them the spirit of love which supplies the strength needed to fulfill the ordinance of the New Law."

If the Christian ideal in the social order, if the goal we aim at, takes into account the supernatural and the victory over original sin and its effects (which remain after baptism but which can nevertheless be transcended through grace), then it is an ideal which, when realized, will call for less and less government, for we will then externalize in society the law of love and liberty of which Saint Paul speaks. The type of society which will realize this will be not State capitalism or State socialism, but Christian anarchism. For the socialist way is the way to bondage, whereas the Christian anarchist way is liberty in a society which respects man's freedom because God respects it to the extent that He allows the greatest of evil to exist (mortal sin) rather than violate it.

In the concrete order, in the world as we know it, the State is an un-Christian and evil entity, so presumptive justice today lies with the individual conscience—if it is a question of the individual conscience and the State. The United States Government, for example, imprisons men like Larry Gara for advising another individual to remain true to his conscience. And the United States Government has committed itself to sanctioning intrinsically evil methods of warfare. The atomic bomb cannot be used without, of necessity, killing many innocent people, and to kill the innocent is a clear violation of the fifth commandment. Therefore the United States Government, by conscription, is demanding that it be allowed to train youth how to commit mortal sin. This alone makes the State an intolerable evil and something Christians should want to see done away with.

In fact, considering the nature of the State and its evil origin and the tyranny it places over us, it is a virtue and an excellent thing to practise civil disobedience and to advocate a Stateless society wherein the liberty of all men is respected. To hold a contrary ideal is to resign oneself in cynicism to the proposition that "Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven" will never come into being.

ROBERT LUDLOW,
Associate Editor,
The Catholic Worker.

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MR. LUDLOW'S quotation from Saint Thomas, in the second paragraph, appears strangely used. As the sentences read, making a law belongs either to the whole people, or to their viceregent. Mr. Ludlow asserts a third alternative which is not in the text he quotes: that the people may (and should) refuse to permit the making of law. The *"either"* which the letter has underlined connects as alternatives "the whole people" and "someone who is the viceregent of the whole people." There is no reference to the individual reserving for himself alone the rôle of lawmaker.

On several scores, the business of the government training "youth how to commit mortal sin" appears more deliciously shocking than intellectually convincing. So extreme a defender of the individual might be expected to agree that mortal sin is a personal act of mind and will freely performed by a person—necessarily. The knowledge how is inherited, as it were, from Adam and Eve, well instructed by the Devil.

The defense against the tyranny of statism can be weakened by resort to the exaggerated dialectic opposite: free-wheeling individualism.—THE EDITORS.

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Voluntary Hospital Plans

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editors: Your editorial on "Progress of Voluntary Hospital Plans" in the September 2 issue of THE COMMONWEAL does not, in my opinion, meet your usual high standards of editorial comment. The false identification of health insurance with socialized medicine merely adds confusion to an issue which is in need of clarification.

The report of the Health Insurance Council cited in your editorial does come as a "decided shock" to those of us who would prefer to see our medical care problem solved by voluntary action if it is possible to do so. The fact that only about 42% of the people have enrolled in voluntary hospital insurance plans in the United States unfortunately appears to me to emphasize the limitations, rather than the "extensiveness," of such plans. In evaluating the "efficacy" of even this limited extent of coverage of voluntary hospital insurance, it must be recognized that hospital bills take only thirteen cents, about a seventh, of the average dollar spent for medical purpose.

Your conclusion that the workers' inability to carry voluntary health insurance is due to faults in the economy as a whole unfortunately does not meet the immediate problem of most workers of providing a method of financing adequate medical care for themselves and their families. The Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction made a similar analysis of the cause of the problem. That statement, however, was realistic in concluding that until the level of legal minimum wages, referred to in your editorial, is reached, "the State should make comprehensive provision for insurance against illness."

We must realize that over half of all families actually receive an income of less than $3,000 a year. The flat rate premium charged under voluntary insurance requires the low-paid worker to pay a higher percentage of his wage than the better paid worker for the same protection. As a result, most low-income families who need insurance protection most cannot afford to carry voluntary insurance. This difficulty can be overcome through a state plan of health insurance which bases contributions on a percent of wages, rather than a flat rate premium. Such a program is, of course, not "socialized medicine" but a method of payment for the costs of medical care by utilizing the social insurance program for that purpose.

LOUIS F. BUCKLEY.

Farm Surplus

Washington, D. C.

TO THE Editors: I have read your interesting editorial on "Farm Surplus" [THE COMMONWEAL, September 2]. The paradox of surplus in one area and starvation in another is not something that we in the Department of Agriculture accept with equanimity. It has been our policy to use food as an ambassador of good will, and it still is.

Unfortunately, we live in the kind of world today where the obstacles to action, such as you suggest with respect to China, are not only many but complex. Our national policies are determined in no small measure by the pressure of public opinion, and that is why I am particularly interested in your effort to bring this question before the minds of your readers.

CHARLES F. BRANNAN
Secretary
Department of Agriculture

Of Note

Liturgy and the New Life

IN A RECENT issue of *Orate Fratres* (Collegeville, Minn.) there is reprinted from the French *Etudes* a study by Paul Doncoeur, S. J. of the place taken by the Eucharist in the development of the Liturgy. Father Doncoeur makes this statement about the Liturgy and the contemporary world:

> . . . just as the neo-gothic of our churches testifies to a total absence of creative spirit, so the religious romanticism a la Chateaubriand, while it succeeded in winning the public away from the encyclopedists of the age of enlightenment, never really managed to discover the true Christian wellsprings. A profound equivocation underlay all this pasticcio. The history of the century shows it all too clearly. The return to the medieval liturgy testified to a taste for archeology which resulted in a refurbishing rather than in a true rebirth. Fr. Jungmann sees in this a sign of tired age—that it seeks the solution of new problems in a mere copying of the past instead of in a realistic and fresh examination of things.
>
> However impressive the work of liturgists of the last hundred years, we must recognize that they were concerned more with restoration than with re-creation. It is legitimate to praise the beauties of Latin, the majesty of ceremonies, the strength of plainchant and of Palestrina's music, or the sacred mystery of our cathedrals which, with Montalembert, we must protect against the Vandals. It is entirely praiseworthy to restore the purity of Roman liturgy by eliminating the floridness of the Gallican rites; to restore the chant of the Church to its ancient Gregorian purity; to create monastic centers which will be sanctuaries preserving a venerable past. But, after all this, our problems will still remain at bottom unsolved. These things furnish matter for an answer; but essential too are a frank facing of the modern crisis and the revitalizing of exegesis, of theology, of mysticism and of the pastoral ministry, in order that the promise of new life which is making itself felt in our day can become a reality. . . . It is possible that Providence is preparing for all of Christendom the more pure and the most powerful source of grace by reawakening the divine forces of its liturgy. It will not be in exterior pomp, nor in esthetic refinements, nor in subtle allegorizing or in archeological curiosity that

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this miraculous force will be concentrated. The words of Christ leave no doubt on that score. It is in the sacrament of His body and blood which He made to be one with that of His cross and of His resurrection, that He communicates to us His divine life, by the eating of the Bread. It is the great Mystery of Faith, the *Mysterium fidei*. The greatest consolation history affords us is the realization that the Holy Spirit is leading us today to that center where the most needy of souls and the most desperate of peoples are crowding in search of their redemption.

The New Bishop of Paris

A REPORT from Paris in the August 27 *Tablet* (128 Sloane St., S.W.1, London, England) has this to say about the man appointed to succeed Cardinal Suhard:

> The nomination of Monsignor Feltin, Archbishop of Bordeaux, to be successor to the late Cardinal Suhard in the See of Paris was received last week with great satisfaction throughout France. On Monsignor Feltin's first nomination to the See of Troyes in 1927 he was the youngest Bishop in France, being then 45 years of age. He came with many titles to the respect of his fellow-countrymen, not least his brilliant record during the first world war. He was transferred successively to the Archepiscopal Sees of Sens and Bordeaux, and reigned in the latter—the Primatial See of Aquitaine—during the recent war. His attitude during the Occupation was of orthodox respect for the established power in the State, and this gave rise to some not disinterested criticism after 1944. But his known assistance to the Grand Rabbi Cohen of Bordeaux, whom he assisted to escape from the Gestapo on several occasions, his preservation of the Torah of the Bordeaux synagogue, and of the flag of Saint-Cyr, which he presented to the College at a ceremony after the Liberation—such acts of charity and patriotism silenced his critics. He was not afraid of unpopularity; he preached in Bordeaux cathedral at a funeral service for Philippe Henriot after the assassination of the Vichy politician, and condemned without qualification these "summary executions."
>
> Monsignor Feltin's various episcopates have been marked by a vigorous development in various forms of social action. At the opening of the academic year in Bordeaux University in 1944 he delivered an allocation defining the Church's attitude towards the use and abuse of private and collective property and to certain abuses of capitalism. During the war he gave considerable encouragement to the first "priest-workman" in his Diocese and also encouraged young seminarians on the dangerous and semi-clandestine mission among the French workers conscripted for Compulsory Labor Service in Germany. The great experiment of the *Mission de Paris,* over which Cardinal Suhard watched so vigilantly, will find understanding in the new Archbishop.

Catholic International News

Problems Confronting Church in Africa

ONLY LAYMEN can overcome the "enormous problems" confronting the Catholic Church in the Union of South Africa, according to Bishop Dennis E. Hurley, O.M.I., Vicar Apostolic of Natal. In an address delivered during Catholic Action Week in Durban, Bishop Hurley described what he considered the "principal problems facing the Catholic Church, and consequently Catholic Action, in South Africa." These, he said, form a task that "only the lay apostolate can do," even though Catholics are a minority group in the Union (approximately 3%).

One of the major problems, Bishop Hurley stated, is that of racial discrimination, which he characterized as "a heavy stone tied about the neck of the Catholic Church in South Africa." Explaining that he himself was raised in the environment of racial divisions in Cape Town and put aside early prejudices only after an inner struggle, Bishop Hurley declared: "There is nothing more foreign or more alien to the Catholic way of thinking than the rigid social and economic barriers erected to protect the purity of race and economic supremacy of Europeans in South Africa . . . The Color Bar means that the Church is divided into watertight compartments." Because of it, he said, schools have had to be duplicated, "even when language, method and syllabus are exactly the same."

Bishop Hurley pointed out that "the great majority" of South Africans, because of racial discrimination "are denied entry into professions and trades, in which alone they can find the blessed discipline of work, the quiet, consistent, steady pursuit of family welfare and prosperity . . . How can we demand any sort of Christian life from a young man to whom we deny the right to work?"

Since Catholic representation in public life is small, Bishop Hurley stated, Catholics have a duty to present a clear picture of the Catholic philosophy of life. "Through Catholic Action men and women should be prepared for the task of representation in government; not that we want to capture power for the selfish purpose of exercising it, but because, other things being equal, the true Catholic is trained in a conception of the state, of duty, of liberty of education, that can only be of the very highest benefit to all society."

The prelate condemned the type of home life in which children who are baptized as Catholics "receive no help whatsoever from their parents in their religious life . . ." Any priest, brother or nun who has had the experience of trying to plant religious doctrine in the arid soil of such a child's soul knows the hopelessness

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of the task in nine cases out of ten," he declared. The Bishop estimated that "perhaps 70 or 80 per cent of the homes from which Catholic children come . . . are built on mixed marriages, in which most frequently the easy familiarity with things of the Faith, which is the very sunshine of a child's soul, is frozen out by and understanding that religion is not to be discussed . . ." The result of homes in which religious practice is not fostered, he said, is that "as the boys and girls reach the difficult age, the age of sudden change and new temptations, the parents cannot reach them, cannot touch their souls, for they have never built the bridge of easy understanding and familiar conversation on religious matters . . ."

The number of baptized Catholics who lose their faith before the age of 25 "is a terrifying thought to contemplate," he declared. He stated that "many sound judges" estimate that "we lose six out of ten children." Even the children who come from homes where parents make a "fair to middling" attempt to train children in religious life "find themselves ill prepared for the society of their contemporaries in the office, the workshop or the university; and go down under the slow cloying weight of criticism, false ideas, indifference and the claims of the flesh."

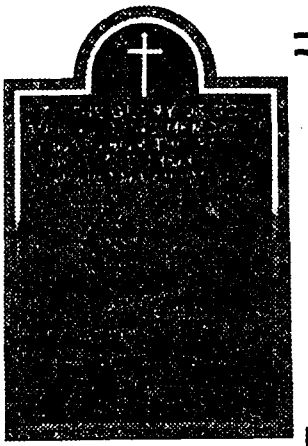
Stating that "behavior speaks louder than words", Bishop Hurley emphasized that no approach to the conversion of South African non-Catholics can be successful "unless the lives of Catholics bear on them the mark of Christ" . . . We in South Africa make no definite, planned approach to our non-Catholic neighbors," he explained, "and yet hundreds of them knock hesitantly at our presbytery doors every year, seeking a way into the Faith that has beckoned to them through the fog of prejudices and distortion. What could we do if we adopted a positive attitude! . . ." (New York, 9/15—CIP.)

Church Expansion in Panama

IN the Republic of Panama, religious instruction is a regular part of the curriculum in all schools, whether public or private," Archbishop Francisco Beckman, C.M. of Panama City told [CIP] in an exclusive interview. "Although there is a serious shortage of priests, religious life in Panama is prosperous," Archbishop Beckman declared. There are now about 100 priests in Panama for a population of about 640,000; 25 of whom are natives.

Archbishop Beckman also declared that a third diocese will probably be established in Panama in the near future. It will cover the Provinces of Chirici and Bocas del Toro. At present there is only the Archdiocese of Panama, under Archbishop Beckman, and the Diocese of Colon (Vicariate Apostolic of Darien), under Bishop Jose Maria Preciado y Nieves, a native of Spain.

There are several Catholic radio programs in Panama. The most important if these is the Catholic Hour, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. The Catholic Action Youth Organization and the Don Bosco Alumni (former students of schools run by the Salesian Fathers)



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sponsor additional programs. One of the most recently added features is a "Question Box," which is also sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, and in which questions on religious topics are answered over the air and by mail. About 1,500 questions were received in the first week, according to the Archbishop.

Archbishop Beckman gave particular praise to the "Hospicio de Don Bosco," which conducts a "remarkable program of vocational training and religious education."

Questioned about the Catholic press in Panama, Archbishop Beckman declared that there is a Catholic weekly, *Adelante,* issued by the Catholic Action organization, as well as a monthly, *Vanguardia,* which is the organ of the Catholic Youth Association. (New York 8/31 CIP.)

The Screen

A Darlin' Place

WISER MEN than I have suggested that the Irish ought to emphasize their charm less and their other assets more. But when one sees a movie like the recently imported *"Saints and Sinners,"* one wonders what these other assets are: certainly some lovely scenery, and certainly the wonderful Abbey Theatre Players, and some very fine writers (not least among whom is Paul Vincent Carroll who wrote the story and script for this amusing film), and certainly a gift of faith, a faith that we don't always understand when it wanders down a superstitious path as in this movie—but a faith that returns stronger than ever to truth. It is, however, the oversold charm of the Irish that "Saints and Sinners" sells most eloquently.

Although the main story, about an ex-convict who returns to his home town of Kilwirra to clear his name, is rather sketchy, and although the younger members of the cast (Kieron Moore as the innocent convict, Sheila Manahan as the stupid lass he loves but who refuses to stick by him, Christine Norden as the mistress of a native who made his fortune in America) have stiff competition with the more experienced actors, the film as a whole is a delight. It is packed with characters who win your heart: Michael Dolan as the wise canon, Maire O'Neill as the pipe-smoking crone whose predictions the villagers listen to avidly, Tomm Dillon as the sentimental Irish-American who now returns to the grave of his neglected mother, and many more actors whose superb performances even in bit rôles add to the film's realism and humor. Producer-director Leslie Arliss has done an excellent job of holding together plot and sub-plots that ramble in several directions; strangely enough the most dramatic material comes out of the dying crone's prank. She predicts that the world will end next Tuesday; and the supertitious villagers, thrown into panic, try so hard to make last minute restitution. It is then that the good canon, who surely must have known his parishioners' faults and virtues, surprises us by saying: "I don't want to live on if all my darling saints are sinners." He gives the town a stiff penance, however, when all the scare and foolishness are over. And the film ends on a strong note of faith and unbeatable Irish charm.

It is interesting at this same time to see a Hollywood visualization of the Irish; and I must say right off that while *"Top O' the Morning"* hasn't quite the realism of "Saints and Sinners," it does have a great deal of charm and it isn't too synthetic. Of course Barry Fitzgerald and Hume Cronyn are a pair of naturals as Irish cops who are thrown into a dither when the Blarney Stone is stolen. Perhaps what gives the picture such an air of authenticity, in spite of a certain Hollywood slickness, is the fact that Barry's brother, Arthur Shields, served as technical adviser and he went out of his way to avoid vaudeville Irish. Well, anyway, to this excited town (all of whose folk love the excitement and one indeed exclaims, "'Tis a pity that Ireland doesn't have more to steal") comes Bing Crosby, an American insurance investigator; and then things really hum. It would be unfair to give away the plot, because Director David Miller succeeds in working up quite a suspense in this thriller, and furthermore, the picture's chief delight is in its good-natured humor and in its pleasant handling of traditional Irish songs which are sung by practically everyone in the cast. Ann Blyth has never been more attractive than as Barry's daughter who falls in love with the frank American; and Bing, who is in excellent voice, turns on a brand of charm that almost equals the Irish. Even as he sinks up to his neck in Irish wit and legend, he remains an American. As one biddy says: "It does little good to put a curse on Americans; they never know the difference."

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IT IS ALSO interesting in connection with these two films that sell charm without half trying, to see how the Russians sell their assets with the help of a moving picture camera. The Soviet film *"The Train Goes East"* tells a rather pleasant boy-meets-girl story as the trans-Siberian express puffs from Moscow to Vladivostok. Because each thinks the other is married, the boy and girl are a little slow along romantic lines, but the script has some amusing banter about the subject and a great deal of propaganda about making the world a better place. We see a prosperous country whenever the boy and girl get off the train and wander around, as they do rather frequently for people who have a set destination, and we see a lot of striking scenery (photographed in color) and we hear a lot of talk about the need for more gardens to make life more beautiful and the necessity of freedom for complete happiness. Since I don't understand the Russian language I had to accept most of the speeches from what I got from the sub-titles; and it seemed to me that the characters were being awfully naive in their conversation. The propaganda is obvious and the main conclusion that one comes to in watching these good-natured happy Russians is that they think most everything in their country is pretty wonderful and what isn't, one day will be.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books

The Thread that Runs So True. Jesse Stuart. Scribners. $3.00.

TEACHING SCHOOL is a full-blooded adventure in such isolated and primitive areas as the eastern Kentucky mountains. If some country bully takes a dislike to his teacher, there is nothing he will not resort to—even a brutal beating—to run him or her out of town. In time of personal feuds or when communities get divided into factions, everyone goes around fully armed. Brute force is often king. On the other hand a rudimentary sense of fair play leads these mountain people to respect personal honesty, courage and achievement. This was the situation which challenged Jesse Stuart—as it had many others before him—when he began at 17 to teach fifty-four classes in the flimsy one-room schoolhouse in "Lonesome Valley."

His strenuous narrative is peppered with names of places and people, probably all of them disguised, but otherwise it seems to be straight autobiography. To balance the many who disregard the law or actively take it into their own hands Mr. Stuart presents a number of portraits of self-sacrificing country school teachers who are devoting their lives to enriching the lives of their long-untutored people. In addition there are scores of others making literally super-human efforts to obtain some sort of education.

★

THROUGHOUT THE ups and downs of his fifteen years as teacher, pedagogy student and supervisor an engagingly naive belief in the magic powers of literacy and elementary education is manifest. What lengths Jesse Stuart himself went to open out for hundreds of boys and girls new windows on the world! With all the vigor of his powerful frame he fought lethargy, political corruption, set institutions and set ways the direct personal and community poverty—everything which blocked the paths he envisaged for his youthful and older charges.

In addition to a warm feeling for people and ardent convictions about education, Jesse Stuart imparts to his story an occasional lyrical note. His reactions to the flowering countryside or to a pretty schoolmarm are clearly those of a poet. He cherishes everything about his native landscape, whatever his discouragement about the ignorance and violence which still abound there. He writes with infectious enthusiasm, never with personal bitterness, of his triumphs and travails.

As with many success stories it is the early struggles which comprise the absorbing part. Even in eastern Kentucky it is possible for life to lose much of its color by becoming institutionalized. But most people who get started on these adventuresome anecdotes about an isolated and inbred people will find themselves drawn to follow them through to the end.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN.

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Goethe the Poet. Karl Viëtor. Harvard. $5.00.

THIS book is the only publication in America that gives a new synthesis of Goethe as a poet and thinker on that literary level to which Goethe's poetical rank and importance in modern history entitles him. The book of the German-born Harvard professor is neither the usual biography of a poet nor the history of his artistic life. Contrary to most books on Goethe it deals not first of all with Goethe the man but attempts an interpreting and, critical appraisal of everything that Goethe wrote.

Goethe is a poet, not a systematic philosopher. He has some dogmatic views concerning geological and optical theories, but on the whole he is just the opposite of a consistent thinker, quite ready to see both sides of problem, and to emphasize at different stages of his life and under different circumstances one viewpoint or another. From the forty volumes of his works, his autobiographical notes, his conversations with all kinds of people and the mine of his letters you can support almost any opinion you wish to attribute to Goethe. It needs the wisdom of a superior Goethe lover like Viëtor to measure the weight of the various quotations and to balance the contradictory in such a way as to gain Goethe's true world outlook.

★

THE APPARENT contrast between Goethe's aristocratic and democratic utterances, is much better balanced in Viëtor's book than in other recent publications. He does not conceal Goethe's bitter words about those loud apostles of freedom who "only crave license and power" for themselves, or Goethe's conviction that the masses are not really creative but, ride the stream of history, wherever it may flow." But, on the other hand, Viëtor emphasizes the democratic ideas of "Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship", the conviction that the individual can only be happy "if he has the courage to feel himself integral to the whole" and that "every potentiality is important and must be developed".

Because of his insight into the political philosophy of Goethe, Viëtor is able to admire one of the great works of Goethe, "The Natural Daughter", which has been unjustly neglected by both poet's contemporaries as well as later generations. This tragedy of the individual who in a time of revolution is caught fast in the nets of fateful circumstances has found in Viëtor's work the best analysis I have ever read.

This is not another popular introduction to Goethe but a profound evaluation of Goethe's creativity and poetic grandeur. In spite of all the bicentenary celebrations there is, as Viëtor aptly says, still a desire "for a better understanding of this great man, a man who must always be included among the few geniuses of the first rank to have appeared in Western Civilization". We regret that Viëtor in his striving to glorify the poet, has somewhat retouched his all-too-human deficiencies and that he has not even mentioned the recent penetrating polemics of the poet Reinhold Schneider.

MAX FISCHER.

The Dark Voyage and the Golden Mean. Albert Cook. Harvard University Press. $3.50

THE DARK VOYAGE AND THE GOLDEN MEAN is not so much a "philosophy of comedy," its sub-title, as an attempt to analyze the difference between comedy and tragedy, in special terms. On the one hand there is the "probable," the normal in life, that which can be expected; and on the other there is the "wonderful," that which is unpredictable, beyond common experience. If I were to try to explain these terms any further, I would be rewriting Albert Cook's book for him.

It seems to me that his criticism is very successful in bringing art into the human, social pattern, especially in an interesting chapter on the plays of Aristophanes, who "in his exploration of human nature versus convention, city versus country, tradition versus intellecualism, failed to reform Athens but produced an eternally symbolic comedy of ideas." The book constitutes a new probing of the artist versus society theme. But the author is over-faithful to his premises, and he works his categories too hard. He has a habit of using virgules and parentheses to excess.

At a couple of points in his book he gives tables with symbols which may be divided between tragedy and comedy in probable—wonderful terms; such as: "social vs. individual", "politician (rationalist of pure action) vs. searcher (mystic, artist, saint)"; "sex vs. death," "manners vs. ethics" and so on. It is unfair to take these terms out of their context, since Albert Cook is conscientious about explaining them, but out of too much explaining comes too much paradox. When he writes: "bourgeois belief/realistic actuality, appearance/reality;" life/dream, logic/illogic, subject/object" he does not prove his pedantry so much as the extent to which he is trying to force the picture into the frame.

He directs his knowledge toward his ends, he makes his analogies with thoroughness. He emphasizes, for example, that our own irrational age is closer to the "wonderful" than the "probable," but by his see-sawing between those terms he also manages to suggest that they belong to a realm of paradox which has more identity than either of them. Perhaps art and society have something in common.

JOHN HAY.

The Jungle is Neutral. F. Spencer Chapman, D.S.O. *Norton.* $3.75.

IT IS A RARE man who would be able to spend three years hunted in a foreign wilderness, isolated from fellow-Europeans as long as a year at a time, and retain his life and sanity. Mr. Chapman did not only that, but preserved his vigor, intelligence and his wit.

Although this book is notable as an honest and effective personal narration, it is primarily the testament of an astonishing man.

Colonel Chapman entered the Malayan jungle when the British withdrew in 1942, as a leader of "stay-behind" groups to harass the Japanese and preserve contact with Malayan guerrillas. For the next three

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years he was an agent, alone with the Communist guerrillas (whose leaders were politically conscious to a grotesque degree, and whose men won Chapman's great regard), or as a member of a tiny British intelligence unit.

In those three years Chapman underwent tremendous physical hardship—disease, wounds, hunger, exposure, capture—in addition to the mental depressions which such a situation must inflict. But always Chapman was a curious, detached, and cultivated intelligence. Because he regarded the jungle as "neutral," he choose to overcome it; he refused to be destroyed by it (as so many men without Chapman's nerve and detachment were). He found pleasure in constant scientific observation. He made good and respected friends among the Malayans and the primitive tribes. He read and noted and wrote and sketched. He was never so overcome with self pity to be unaware of what was real and beautiful about him.

WILLIAM PFAFF.

The Portable Medieval Reader. Edited by James Bruce Ross and Mary Martin McLaughlin. Viking. $2.00.

PROVIDED WITH A scholarly and warmly human introduction, this is a delightful anthology of the writings of men and women between the years 1050 and 1500. The aim of the editors is to give, by means of selections from contemporary reports, a picture of the whole structure of the Middle Ages. The less known chronicles have been used whenever possible. The language throughout is modern, most of the renderings of recent date, and the lover of medieval lore, who has not kept his reading up to the minute, will find numerous references to works of research with which he is not familiar. There is a chronological table, but, unfortunately, no biographical notes and no index.

A modern might cavil at the arrangement of subject matter: somehow it partakes of that attempt at order so characteristic of the medieval thinkers. However, having read the first selection, one from John of Salisbury's *Policraticus,* categories seem natural enough, and the pieces that go to the making of that mosaic, "Part One: The Body Social," fall into place. By the time the reader reaches Odo of Rigaud's record of his visitation of rural churches in Normandy and Robert de Sorbonne's "Statutes for a College," he has a picture of the good and bad.

The section on the Crusades is important, although a trifle heavy with Near East narrative, and the writings on adventures and voyages are happily chosen. The painful state of society in England and France is presented by means of many vivid fragments, notably Roger of Wendover's account of the uprising of the London poor, a passage on Watt Tyler's revolt from the *Anonimalle Chronicle,* several excepts from William Langland, and the description of Paris during the Hundred Years War from the familiar *Journal d'un bourgeois.* The impression given by these is modified by some homely and pleasing writing on domestic life from the *Stonor Letters* and *The Goodman of Paris.*

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The volume is particularly rich in samples of writings on the humanities, with Hugh of Saint Victor, Walter Map and Roger Bacon represented. Religious belief, a knowledge of which is so essential to an understanding of the period, is duly stressed. The selections from Saint Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra gentiles* and from the writings of Nicholas of Cusa are eminently fitting.

Geoffrey le Baker's description of the Battle of Poitiers and Henry Knighton's of the Black Death, both ably translated by the editors, are given rather than the more familiar writings of Froissart and Boccaccio. This was probably a wise substitution, and it was certainly sensible to presuppose acquaintance with the *Divine Comedy* and the *Canterbury Tales* and to refrain from quoting them.

Taken all in all, the picture of the Middle Ages evoked by the selections is unduly solemn. The history of the times is here rather than the entire spirit of the times. Had the great medieval cities of Italy, Perugia, Florence and Siena been given more prominence this might have been different, the whole would have been pointed up by including more references to their redundant activity. A human touch with the religion of the period would have resulted from giving more space to the popular saints and, above all to Our Lady. But nothing of Saint Francis of Assisi's is here save his glorious "Canticle of the Sun." Not a single one of Saint Catherine of Siena's tender and virile letters, nor a scrap from Saint Bernard of Clairvaux or Saint Bonaventure or Saint Bernardine. About five pages in all are devoted to writings on the Blessed Virgin, and since it was she who inspired so many of the painters of the Trecento as well as the builders of Paris and Chartres, this is surprising. And surely when the compilers of *The Portable Medieval Reader* prepare a second edition, they will remember the role of their Jacopone da Todi's "Queen of all courtesy" throughout the Middle Ages.

D.H. MOSELEY.

The American Guide. Edited by Henry G. Alsberg. Hastings. $7.50.

"THE only complete travel guide to the United States," even with its million words, can go only very lightly over the eight regions and along all the roads of the United States. It is more useful as a brief reminder of places visited than as a guide for trips in process. The source of the work is the WPA State Guide series, and much of their value is retained.

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